

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DHS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS OFFICE

The Emergency Preparedness Office, of the Environmental Management Branch (EMB), is responsible for ensuring that the Department of Health Services (DHS) is prepared to respond to disasters and for coordinating the DHS disaster response activities. In order to accomplish this objective, the program has the following emergency preparedness and response roles:

PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES

- Coordinate the 24-hour duty officer program, to ensure that the Department is prepared to respond to public health emergencies or major disasters at any time.
- Represent DHS as liaison to the Office of Emergency Services (OES), Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA), U. S. Public Health Service, Federal Emergency Management Agency, California Conference of Local Health Officers, California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health, and other federal, state, and local agencies regarding disaster preparedness issues, and coordinate DHS emergency planning and response activities with these agencies.
- In conjunction with OES and DHS Administration, plan for and ensure that DHS staff:
 - 1) Receive training in the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), DHS emergency responsibilities, and how to perform those responsibilities;
 - 2) Participate in emergency exercises; and
 - 3) Receive information on home safety and preparedness to increase their effectiveness and availability as DHS emergency responders.
- In conjunction with Administration and DHS programs, plan for the Joint DHS/EMSA Emergency Operations Center (JEOC) and the DHS Emergency Coordination Center (ECC). These facilities will serve as the central point for the coordination and support of DHS disaster response activities and facilitate information gathering and analysis. The JEOC, which is activated to support the EMSA response to major disasters involving mass casualties, will coordinate the acquisition of medical supplies, personnel, and equipment from unaffected areas of the state, and will identify hospital resources in unaffected areas for the receipt of casualties.
- Review the emergency communication needs of DHS programs, and work with the Program Support Branch to ensure that all DHS units will have the communication resources sufficient to carry out their disaster responsibilities.

- Act as liaison to the DHS and Health and Welfare Agency emergency amateur-radio stations (CARES). Provide support to and encourage participation in the amateur radio emergency communications programs.
- Arrange for emergency identification for DHS employees who will need to enter the disaster area to conduct response and recovery activities.
- Maintain communication with all DHS programs with emergency responsibilities and address questions raised by program staff regarding administrative, legal, and other issues.
- In conjunction with DHS programs, update the DHS Emergency Plan and Procedures annually.
- In conjunction with OES and DHS Administration, determine the number and types of DHS personnel that will be required to staff the OES State Operations Center and Regional Emergency Operations Centers.

EMERGENCY ACTIVITIES

- Based on the severity of a disaster, activate and manage the department's Emergency Coordination Center or the Joint Emergency Operations Center to support the public health and medical response to the disaster.
- Ensure that the Director, Executive Staff, and appropriate DHS program staff are informed of any emergency warnings, advisories, situation status reports, or other emergency-related information issued by OES.
- Act as liaison between the DHS Executive Staff, Disaster Policy Council and the Emergency Operations Center.

RECOVERY ACTIVITIES

- Coordinate the orderly deactivation of the JEOC and the return to normal program operations.
- Coordinate the preparation of after-action reports and recommendations by all DHS programs that responded to the disaster. Ensure that lessons learned from the response are incorporated in the department's emergency plans and procedures.
- Facilitate post-disaster cost recovery activities in coordination with the Financial Management Branch.